

MAR 13 2015

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONVENE A SPECIAL
EDUCATION TASK FORCE TO EVALUATE PROGRESS TOWARD
IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE *HAWAII DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION SPECIAL EDUCATION REVIEW* AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE REGARDING WAYS TO
IMPROVE DELIVERY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND SUPPORTS
TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

1 WHEREAS, students with disabilities are entitled to a free
2 and appropriate public education; and
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4 WHEREAS, there are significant costs associated with
5 providing transportation to students with disabilities; and
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7 WHEREAS, the cost of providing special education and
8 related services was thirty percent of the Department of
9 Education's instructional budget in fiscal year 2013-2014; and
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11 WHEREAS, only one of four students with disabilities
12 demonstrates proficiency in reading while three out of four of
13 their non-disabled peers are proficient; and
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15 WHEREAS, the growth rate in reading and mathematics
16 proficiency for students with disabilities, as measured by the
17 Department of Education's StriveHI Performance System, is less
18 than that of their non-disabled peers; and
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20 WHEREAS, the achievement gap between students with
21 disabilities and non-disabled students has been stagnant over
22 the past five years, despite reform efforts; and
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24 WHEREAS, the chronic absenteeism rate for students with
25 disabilities is greater than for their non-disabled peers; and
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27 WHEREAS, the suspension rate for students with disabilities
28 is greater than for their non-disabled peers; and
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S.R. NO. III

1 WHEREAS, the graduation rate for students with disabilities
2 was more than twenty percentage points lower than for their non-
3 disabled peers in the 2013-2014 school year; and
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5 WHEREAS, the State of Hawaii has been found to have
6 improperly implemented its special education programs, and
7 continues to face legal action alleging improper implementation
8 of special education programs; and
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10 WHEREAS, the Department of Education commissioned the
11 *Hawaii Department of Education Special Education Review* by the
12 WestEd Center for Prevention and Early Intervention in 2010 to
13 identify areas for improving the delivery of special education
14 services; and
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16 WHEREAS, the review identified numerous areas for
17 improvement including improvements to the overall special
18 education system and structure, alignment of resources to ensure
19 system effectiveness and accountability for results, and
20 building capacity to meet legal requirements and move to a focus
21 on instruction and student performance; now, therefore,
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23 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
24 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015,
25 that the Department of Education is requested to convene a
26 special education task force to evaluate the Department of
27 Education's progress in implementing the recommendations of the
28 *Hawaii Department of Education Special Education Review* and make
29 recommendations regarding ways to improve delivery of special
30 education services and supports to improve outcomes for students
31 with disabilities; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the special education task
34 force be composed of the following members:
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- 36 (1) Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Education, or
37 the Chairperson's designee;
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39 (2) Chairperson of the House of Representatives Committee
40 on Education, or the Chairperson's designee;
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S.R. NO. III

- (3) Chairperson of the Board of Education, or the Chairperson's designee;
- (4) Chairperson of the Special Education Advisory Council, or the Chairperson's designee;
- (5) Superintendent of Education, or the Superintendent's designee;
- (6) Federal Programs Officer of the Department of Education, or the Officer's designee;
- (7) Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Education, or the Chief Financial Officer's designee;
- (8) A representative from the general membership of the Special Education Advisory Council;
- (9) A representative from the Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii's Parent Training and Information Center; and
- (10) A representative from the Community Children's Councils; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the special education task force submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, Chairperson of the Special Education Advisory Council, Executive Director of the Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii, and Chairpersons of the Community Children's Councils.

OFFERED BY: Michelle Iudani

